

# Born Free

by Kimberly Fletcher



For five thousand years people lived in grass houses, plowed fields with their bare hands and lived every day just to survive. In a little over two hundred years we have gone from grass houses to Victorian mansions, from wagons to motor cars, from the Pony Express to Federal Express and it all began with the simple knowledge that men are free. Our Founding Fathers didn't just come up with an idea and thought they'd try it out. They had studied centuries of history repeating itself. They witnessed tyranny and oppression first hand. They knew that power corrupts and that ultimate power corrupts ultimately and they knew there *must* be a better way.

They found that better way at the foot of their mother's knee as she read to them the stories of the Bible.

Each night families would gather together and read the stories that gave them hope, direction, guidance, and understanding. They read about the deep faith and unwavering obedience of Abraham, the courage of Stephen, the steadfastness of Job, and the charity of Ruth. They read of Daniel who sacrificed his own life for what he knew to be right and true, David who stood against Goliath, and Esther who sacrificed her own well-being to save her people.

They read about Joseph who mastered his own passions, and later prepared Pharaoh for the coming famine by storing food for seven years—an act that made Egypt the richest nation in the world for centuries. They read the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus taught of all the attributes a person needs to govern themselves. And when they read those powerful words of Paul when he stood before King Agrippa stating, "I was born free", they came to understand for the first time in centuries, that their rights came from God and not from man.

With tear filled eyes, they read of the Israelites who *knew* they were free but begged for a King, and traded their freedom for a monarchy because freedom was too much work. How it must have made our Founders ache to read those words. To them—being living witnesses to the evil and oppression of a monarchy—it was the same as trading a divine birthright for a bowl of soup.

The Bible was the foundation that cultivated the soil of liberty and America was the venue God chose to house it. Our Founding Families knew what freedom was long before it was openly declared in the Declaration of Independence. Because of that simple, consistent act of reading the bible together as families, the knowledge that man's rights

came from God and not government was infused in their very souls. And when they saw that knowledge manifested in the United States Constitution they embraced it as the banner of freedom that would secure their liberties not only for themselves but for their posterity for generations to come.

Our Founding Families learned all the key ingredients to a free society in those well worn pages of the Bible—self-mastery, self-reliance, self-sacrifice, and self governance. With this knowledge, they *found* the better way and they thoroughly believed that with these key ingredients, and the divine intervention of a loving God, man could in fact govern himself. They believed it with all their heart and formed our entire government on that belief.

Our Founding Fathers learned what freedom was from the *Bible*. When they signed the Declaration of Independence they knew they were going against Goliath. When they pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honor they—like Daniel and Esther—sacrificed their own lives and well-being for what they knew to be right and true.

For over a hundred and fifty years, families read together, ate together, worked together, and served together. And in 1776, we saw the fruits of their labors as fifty six men, raised with an understanding of these principles, pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor for the greatest contribution of freedom ever made on this earth. And when they penned the words “We hold these truths to be self evident”, they did so with the words of Paul echoing in their ears and they *knew* they were “born free!”

For over a century Americans learned what freedom meant. For the next two centuries they lived it and now, in this century, we are in danger of losing it. There are troubling times ahead for our nation.

Now, more than ever, we need those timeless stories of faith, courage, and freedom from the Bible in our lives. They are the stories that touched the hearts of our Founding Families; they are the stories that laid the foundation of freedom; and they are the stories that will revive the spirit of liberty in the hearts of this generation; and leave their imprint on generations to come.

“Perhaps,” as **KrisAnne Hall** has suggested, “our job is not necessarily to win this fight but to prepare the ground; to make the soil fertile and sow the seeds so that Liberty may thrive when the battle is done.” When we lay that foundation as our Founders did—firmly rooted in the Bible, then the foundation will be sure; and we will be evidenced in the hearts and actions of our children.

When our sons and daughters raise their hands to defend the Constitution of the United States, to pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor for the cause of freedom; then we will know liberty is secure, because we will know our children know what it means. They will know because they will remember the stories we read to them. They will know because they will remember the love of liberty we shared with them. They will know, because they will remember that story they once heard us tell about a man named Paul, and they will know ***they were born free!***

# Message from A Columbine Father

by Darrell Scott



*Darrell Scott's daughter Rachel was killed April 20, 1999 at Columbine High School when two teenage boys shot 12 of their fellow students and one teacher, then took their own lives. The event has become known as the Columbine Massacre. Following the shooting Mr. Scott was invited to speak before the House Judiciary Committee in Washington D.C. Following is a partial transcript of what he said.*

"Since the dawn of creation there has been both good & evil in the hearts of men and women. We all contain the seeds of kindness or the seeds of violence. The death of my wonderful daughter, Rachel Joy Scott, and the deaths of that heroic teacher, and the other eleven children who died must not be in vain. Their blood cries out for answers."  
"The first recorded act of violence was when Cain slew his brother Abel out in the field.

The villain was not the club he used. Neither was it the NCA, the National Club Association. The true killer was Cain, and the reason for the murder could only be found in Cain's heart. "In the days that followed the Columbine tragedy, I was amazed at how quickly

fingers began to be pointed at groups such as the NRA.

I am not a member of the NRA. I am not a hunter. I do not even own a gun. I am not here to represent or defend the NRA - because I don't believe that they are responsible for my daughter's death. Therefore I do not believe that they need to be defended. If I believed they had anything to do with Rachel's murder I would be their strongest opponent."

"I am here today to declare that Columbine was not just a tragedy-it was a spiritual event that should be forcing us to look at where the real blame lies! Much of the blame lies here in this room.

Much of the blame lies behind the pointing fingers of the accusers themselves. "I wrote a poem that expresses my feelings best. This was written way before I knew I would be speaking here today:"

**Your laws ignore our deepest needs,  
Your words are empty air.  
You've stripped away our heritage,**

You've outlawed simple prayer.  
Now gunshots fill our classrooms,  
And precious children die.  
You seek for answers everywhere,  
And ask the question "Why?"  
You regulate restrictive laws,  
Through legislative creed.  
And yet you fail to understand,  
That God is what we need!

"Men and women are three-part beings. We all consist of body, soul, and spirit. When we refuse to acknowledge a third part of our make-up, we create a void that allows evil, prejudice, and hatred to rush in and wreak havoc. Spiritual influences were present within our educational systems for most of our nation's history. Many of our major colleges began as theological seminaries. This is a historical fact.

What has happened to us as a nation? We have refused to honor God, and in so doing, we open the doors to hatred and violence. And when something as terrible as Columbine's tragedy occurs politicians immediately look for a scapegoat such as the NRA. They immediately seek to pass more restrictive laws that contribute to erode away our personal and private liberties.

We do not need more restrictive laws." Eric and Dylan would not have been stopped by metal detectors. No amount of gun laws can stop someone who spends months planning this type of massacre. The real villain lies within our own hearts.

Political posturing and restrictive legislation are not the answers. The young people of our nation hold the key. There is a spiritual awakening taking place that will not be

squelched! We do not need more religion. We do not need more gaudy television evangelists spewing out verbal religious garbage. We do not need more million dollar church buildings built while people with basic needs are being ignored.

We do need a change of heart and a humble acknowledgment that this nation was founded on the principle of simple trust in God!" "As my son Craig lay under that table in the school library and saw his two friends murdered before his very eyes, He did not hesitate to pray in school. I defy any law or politician to deny him that right!

I challenge every young person in America, and around the world, to realize that on April 20, 1999, at Columbine High School prayer was brought back to our schools. Do not let the many prayers offered by those students be in vain. Dare to move into the new millennium with a sacred disregard for legislation that violates your God-given right to communicate with Him. To those of you who would point your finger at the NRA – I give to you a sincere challenge.

Dare to examine your own heart before casting the first stone! My daughter's death will not be in vain! The young people of this country will not allow that to happen!"

## Discussion Questions

- ★ *Who are some of your favorite role models in the scriptures? Why?*
- ★ *What role did the Bible play in the lives of the founding families and in the birth of the nation?*
- ★ *What do you think the connections are between faith and liberty?*
- ★ *What does it mean to you to be "born free"?*
- ★ *How can we make the scriptures a central part of our kids' lives?*
- ★ *What were the most powerful parts of the readings for you?*
- ★ *What can we learn from Darrell Scott's message?*
- ★ *In what ways do you think our laws and society have neglected the spiritual aspect of our identity?*
- ★ *How can we restore its importance in the law and society?*
- ★ *What does Mr. Scott say needs to happen for his daughter's death to not be in vain?*
- ★ *What does a "change of heart and a humble acknowledgment" of God look like in our lives?*